
Best Practice Fact Sheet – Workforce Development

PROJECT QUEST – San Antonio, Texas

Project

Description: CBO-centered program with strong employer and community involvement, combines college-based training with intensive case management, support services, and job placement and retention services.

Target Population: Low-income, low-skilled mostly Hispanic adults, between 39% and 48% on public assistance (TANF and/or food assistance)

Goal: The primary goals are to develop a skilled and educated workforce, place participants in jobs paying family-level wages and ultimately to strengthen the local economy.

Cost: As of July 2009 total investment of \$37,167,000, compared to gross return (wages earned, taxes generated, reduction in TANF and food assistance) of \$472,213,000 = \$435,046,000 net return; mix of public and private funding.

Evidence: Program evaluations: Public/Private Ventures – Sectoral Employment Initiative (1998-2002); the Aspen Institute – Sectoral Employment Development Learning Project 1997-2001); Osterman Report (1996).

Caseload Data: Assisted almost 600 and graduated almost 200 during SFY 2008; has assisted over 3,650 adults since 1992.

Assessment: Screened and assessed by case managers

Services Overview:

- Outreach and recruitment
- Comprehensive skills assessment
- High-demand occupational training programs
- Intense case management and support services.
- Job search and placement assistance.
- Job retention services for up to 18 months after placement.
- Current in-demand occupations are in health care, IT and business services, and maintenance and repair.

Eligibility: Adults who lack the education or skills to get family-wage jobs.

Findings:

Two most recent evaluation studies show similar results:

- After two years, 91% to 96% of graduates remain employed full-time in sector for which trained
- Boost in hourly wages from about \$7.00 to \$13.00 per hour; boost in annual earnings from about \$6,000 to almost \$25,000.
- 73% to 96% get jobs with benefits.

Implications for policymakers and program developers to consider:

- Connections to employers, training providers (colleges), and community-based organizations

- Board includes both business members (representing needs of employers) and community members (representing needs of clients), with community members in majority.
- Mix of public and private funding.

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